

Welcome to Reception

Reception Newsletter September 2009

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Reception! During your child's time at Streatham Wells you will receive a newsletter every half term to give you a brief outline of what your child will be doing and to let you know about any forthcoming events. Below is a brief outline of the curriculum to be covered this half term.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Over the next few weeks we will be helping your child to settle into their new environment and to get used to the rules and routines of the school. This is a big step and provides our main focus in Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Circle Time activities will give the children opportunities to learn all about their new friends and to develop their own sense of belonging within their new class. The children will also be encouraged to develop independence within the setting and to share and take turns with others.

Communication, Language and Literacy

The children will be looking at a range of texts and building up a bank of their favourite books. The children will take part in individual, small group and whole class book sessions involving looking closely at favourite characters, story retelling using puppets, dressing up and acting out favourite texts. We will also begin our Jolly Phonics programme which will introduce the children to the shapes and sounds of different letters. This is a really fun way of learning such a valuable skill and the children really enjoy the programme. Your support with this is invaluable and your child's success relies greatly upon the support that they receive not only in class but also at home. I have already given you a more detailed letter explaining how you can help at home in the Reception welcome pack. The children will also be involved in numerous mark-making activities and will be exploring writing for different purposes.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

This half term we will be exploring the purpose of number and will be practising counting sets of objects accurately. Number recognition will also be a focus. We will be encouraging the children to find different ways of solving mathematical problems including number, shape and space. You can help your child at home this half term by pointing out numerals in the environment, practising counting sets of objects and by playing number games with your child. The more fun that the children have when learning their numbers, the more they will be motivated to learn.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

In this area of the curriculum the children will be collecting, sorting and investigating objects, using a range of construction tools and materials, finding out how to operate simple equipment, joining together construction materials and balancing objects. We will also be looking at how materials change through sand and water play and various cooking activities. The children will be encouraged to use the computer on a regular basis and will be taking part in weekly visits to the school's computer suite.

Physical Development

The children will have access to a range of materials to develop fine motor skills (e.g. playdough) and gross motor skills (e.g. climbing equipment and bikes). In addition to this we will be introducing the children to weekly Physical Development sessions in the hall which will involve movement games, dancing and using apparatus.

Creative Development

Our Creative Area gives the children the opportunity to use a range of media including paint, clay and other modeling equipment. Our focus this half term is on mixing colours and combining a variety of media to create different effects. Daily singing sessions, use of instruments and fortnightly singing assemblies will give the children opportunities to develop their musical skills. We are also lucky to have weekly 'Colourstrings' sessions which involves an outside teacher coming into Reception to lead a singing and movement session.

❖ BOOK BAGS

Book bags should be brought into school **every** day. The children will be choosing their own library books to share with you and we will be selecting a 'special' book that they will be able to read to you. These books will contain only pictures to begin with and the pictures will tell a story for you and your child to talk about together. When the children are more confident with their letter sounds, books with words will gradually be introduced. Please try and share a book with your child every day. Books will be changed three times a week, although you are welcome to select a book with your child to take home at any time.

❖ WELCOME MEETING

We will be holding a Welcome Meeting later in the term to give you the opportunity to have a look around the school and meet some key members of the school community. A letter will be given out nearer the time.

❖ MESSY PLAY

Our aim in the Foundation Stage is to provide the children with as wide a range of experiences as is possible, including some very messy play both outside and indoors and in all weathers. These activities will include mud, rain, glue, paint, water and wet sand and clay. Please ensure that your child is appropriately dressed to allow them to participate in **all** of these activities. We appreciate your support.

❖ BIRTHDAYS

If it is your child's birthday, we would like to celebrate the occasion. If you would like to provide a treat please can we ask that you bring cake only. Thank you.

❖ VOLUNTEERS

In the Foundation Stage we recognise and greatly value the skills and experience of all parents/carers. If you would like to help out in Reception in some way we would like to hear from you. Previous volunteers have for example, helped change book bags, translated books into different languages, helped during the celebration of different religious festivals, and shared specific skills such as sewing or cooking.

Please notify either myself or Izzara if any significant changes occur at home so that we can provide the best support for your child. It is also important that you inform us about who will be collecting your child from school as we do not let them go home with adults that we do not know. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask.